

Putting all those flying objects in their philosophical place

Sir,— Most people want to believe that some UFOs — those that aren't meteorites or weather balloons — really are spaceships from extraterrestrial civilisations, and that one did indeed crash in New Mexico in 1947 (Saturday People, July 4).

The military, too, are interested in UFOs. Any flying object which may, say, be coming towards America over the North Pole and which DEW radar shows to be on an impact trajectory for New York, needs to be identified: it may be a ballistic missile, a decaying satellite, or a spaceship piloted by an alien with a sadistic sense of humour.

So the military, with the added plus of vast resources, is the natural organisation to investigate UFOs. The trouble is, in the West at least, nobody



quite believes what the military tells them. When a normally secretive person tells you something is untrue, your natural reaction is disbelief and that there actually is, tucked away in a concealed hanger, the wreckage of an alien spaceship, a 40-year-old secret project.

If the story is true, why haven't the public been told? The best reason, of course, is to prevent culture shock.

When a primitive and an advanced culture meet, it is the primitive which suffers. In our case this suffering might take an odd form: perhaps a vast

swing of public interest away from fighting the Russians and towards an international programme to build a starship or a reception centre for the aliens. Imagine the political and economic consequences of such a change in public opinion. How would East-West politics cope? How would the military-industrial complex react?

Or suppose the American crash investigators had found evidence that the spaceship had been built by a civilisation with a socialist political system? Would a Republican president tell the public?

Or, least interesting of all, there really was no crash and the military are telling the truth?

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